

Board of Trustees
Suffolk County Department of Parks
Recreation and Conservation
Minutes of September 21, 2006 at
Meschutt Beach County Park, Hampton Bays

**BOARD MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ray Corwin | Chairman, Member at Large |
| Aurelio Colina | Vice Chairman, Town of Southampton |
| Miles Borden | Trustee, Town of Smithtown |
| Gil Cardillo | Trustee, Town of Riverhead |
| Gregory Dawson | Trustee, Town of Islip |
| Jeanine Dillon | Member of the Board |
| John Fritz | Trustee, Town of Babylon |
| Scott Hilary | Trustee, Town of Southold |
| Alexander McKay | Trustee, Town of Huntington |
| Gary Olsen | Trustee, Town of Brookhaven |
| Terrence Pearsall | Member of the Board |

ABSENT:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Richard F. White, Jr. | Trustee, Town of East Hampton |
| Vacant | Trustee, Town of Shelter Island |

PARKS DEPARTMENT:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ronald F. Foley | Commissioner |
| Tracey Bellone | Deputy Commissioner |
| Colleen Hofmeister | Contracts Manager |
| William B. Sickles | Senior Parks Superintendent |
| Tom Hroncich | Marketing Specialist |
| Ann Rothenberg | Assistant to the Commissioner |

GUESTS:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Jennifer Kohn | Assistant County Attorney |
| Lauretta Fischer | Principal Environmental Analyst, Planning Department |
| Janet Longo | Assistant to Commissioner, Department of Environment & Energy |
| John Turner | Director, Environmental Planning, Town of Brookhaven |
| Dennis Cole | Chief Environmental Analyst - Town of Brookhaven |
| John M. Kennedy, Jr. | Legislator, 12th SC Legislative District |

Chairman Corwin opened the meeting.

Chairman Corwin introduces Legislator Kennedy who will be discussing items on the agenda.

Legislator Kennedy: There were two items on the agenda I'd like to discuss and show my support of as we move forward. I'd like to commend the Parks Department and the Commissioner for the excellent job they perform. On behalf of Legislature, I'd also like to thank the Trustees for the important work they do.

PUBLIC PORTION

Steve Jendricks, resident of Oakdale, NY: I have been fishing and hunting all over Long Island, mainly at Smith Point. Prior to the establishment of the park and camping areas, fishermen and hunters always had access to the six miles of current county property by either Burma Road or the outer beach. With Burma Road currently being closed at the campsite area, there is only the option of limited use of cut #1 when conditions allow. I'm proposing the county reconsider Burma Road access from the beach entrance area adjacent to the current east campsite for the purpose of surf fishing and duck hunting. I would suggest the county give us access from Burma Road through authorized dune crossing areas, both to the beach and to the bay. These access areas would be similar to those at Cupsogue County Park, utilizing dune crossing areas with limited parking at these sites for legitimate surf fishing only. In addition, there would be two bay access areas for duck hunting; one at the Old Forge River Life Saving Service Dock and the other at the west end of Great Gun Beach. Access to Burma Road, through the campsite area, would be from September 15th to May 15th. No direct Burma Road access around the campsite area would be a waste of approximately six miles of prime fishing and hunting areas. Thank you.

Commissioner Foley: The situation at Smith Point with outer beach access is very fluid depending on what Mother Nature gives us in the way of erosion and high tides. We have had some negative impact from the last two passing hurricanes that went way south of us but pushed the ocean higher than it normally is. We also had the same type of erosion at Cupsogue, where we don't usually get it. This has caused us to occasionally close the outer beach access at Smith Point for everyone. This proposal, in part, would run some of the traffic through the campground and you're also talking about a cut through the dune. We have to be very careful with things like that because of the environmental impact. Before we make any dramatic change, we have to measure the environmental impact of it and the impact on other users of the park. We try to be there for everyone, but it can get tight because of things beyond our control. We'll take a look at it and see what we can do and try to keep people informed of what's going on.

Trustee Fritz: It appears the beach is now dependent on the campers. We understand the outer beach being closed due to erosion and the piping plover, and the fishermen can live with that, but you also have six miles of Burma Road which is cut short by 200 ft. by the eastern end of the campground. There's no vegetation there and it could very well provide four-wheel drive access to connect with Burma Road. I wish you would look into it.

Bill Sickles: At the east end of the campground is the septic system field for all the rest rooms. That's why it's not heavily vegetated. That's where all the cesspools are.

Chairman Corwin: You have to be careful, you don't want to create an erosion pattern near the septic field and then have a problem later.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 17, 2006

Page 2 – Seventh line from bottom of page - spelling correction: ambitious

Page 4 – Paragraph 3, third line – change to hold funding in escrow....

Page 8 – Adjust a motion to accept this plan, as amended, was passed....

Page 10 – Third line down - adjust from Chairman Corwin to Trustee McKay: Have you been in

contact with.....

Page 13 – Line 9 – change Trustee Fritz to Trustee Colina asked that we update....

Page 13 – Fifth line from bottom - change Trustee McKay to Trustee White responded yes.....

A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Trustee Colina and seconded by Trustee McKay. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

PRESENTATION BY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE

Lauretta Fischer presented six acquisitions.

DeRenzi Property on Forge River, Town of Brookhaven

Acquisition of a very small, .092 acre lot around Forge River Watershed which has been under a lot of environmental stresses. This is part of a 200 acre area that the county is attempting to acquire for Open Space and was part of the 2004 Master List.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee Olsen. Unanimously approved by vote of 11-0-0.

San Remo Floodplain, Town of Smithtown

Acquisition of 0.2 acre lot in the hamlet of Kings Park that was on the County's Master List. Both the town and county have been looking at this area that feeds into Nissequogue River. This is part of a low lying wetland area the county is trying to acquire under the Old Suffolk County Drinking Water Protection Program.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee McKay. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

Santapogue Creek, Town of Babylon

Acquisition of 1.0 acres in the hamlet of West Babylon to protect stream corridors which flow into the Great South Bay which influences water quality in the bay. Wherever the county sees vacant land, vacant wetland, we try to acquire them to create a link between the headwaters of the streams down as far as we can go - all the way down to Great South Bay.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Fritz and seconded by Trustee Cardillo. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

Emerald Estates, Town of Huntington

Acquisition of 1.25 acres in Greenlawn, which is another piece of the puzzle to acquire a stretch of 20 acres of mature oak forests. There is a trail that we will eventually be connecting all of the surrounding lots to.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee McKay and seconded by Trustee Colina. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

Commerdinger Property, Town of Smithtown

Acquisition of 5.58 acres in Nesconset surrounded by Lily Pond Park at the northern portion of the whole Lake Ronkonkoma watershed area and surrounded by fresh water wetlands. There is one residence in the southern portion and we're proposing to acquire this under the Save Open Space Program, Hamlet Parks Component.

Chairman Corwin: What will become of the house?

Legislator Kennedy: That property tails down to a wetland bog area, but subject property itself has a 15 – 20 ft. elevation so actually would be ripe for development. It has been subject to intense interest by a variety of different developers as well as equestrian operators. There have been several offers made to the owners to turn this into a horse farm. The house itself is on the Smithtown Historic Properties inventory list and dates to between 1805 and 1810. There has been a request on behalf of the heirs to maintain the home and there's an active civic association in the neighborhood who is also involved. In addition, there is an Indian assembly ground in the lower southern quarter called White Sands. I'd like to praise the Parks Department for seeing this as a natural acquisition and special thanks to the Division of Real Estate who worked mightily on this. I very much would ask the Trustees to approve the acquisition.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee Cardillo. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

Thomas and Sweeney Property, Town of Smithtown

Acquisition of .36 acres at the entrance to Lake Ronkonkoma County Park. It was a trailer park that was in disrepair for many years and we are now proposing to acquire this under multi-faceted for parkland purposes.

Legislator Kennedy: The county has been interested in this property for a long time. The trailers are in a very sad state of disrepair and it is an odd location for residences. Real Estate was very pro active with one. This acquisition will allow Parks to occupy the area and turn it into something that integrates with the balance of the park. I ask the Board for their support on this acquisition.

A motion to approve proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee Pearsall. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

PRESENTATION BY THE TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN

John Turner: What the town is doing is hoping to gain Trustees approval for a project undertaken by the Town of Brookhaven relating to trail corridors. We are trying to establish hiking trails in the town. The Town of Brookhaven, like any other town in the county, is undergoing intense development pressure and if we don't take the opportunity to move forward with this now, we probably won't be able to 10, 15, or 20 years from now. To that end, there are two major trail corridors we want to present. They do involve Suffolk County Parks. We met with the Commissioner and Bill Sickles two months ago and they suggested that we present our project to Parks Trustees.

The Glacial Ridge Trail represents linkage and buffer parcels along a five mile trail which runs east-west along the Ronkonkoma terminal moraine between Brookhaven Town Hall and public land on the Carman's River.

The Shore-to-Core Trail represents parcels in the trail corridor linking Wildwood State Park (on Long Island Sound), Camp Wauwepex, DEC's Calverton Conservation Area, and publicly-owned land in the Pine Barrens Core, including DEC's Otis Pike Preserve and Robert Cushman Murphy County Park. This trail links with the Pine-to-Bay Trail in Manorville to create a shore-to-shore hiking trail from the Long Island Sound to Great South Bay.

The component on the southern half of this trail is approximately 22 miles. For the last 18 months we have been working hard to make this trail become a reality. This trail is really starting to come together.

John Turner reviews path of trail on display chart.

Chairman Corwin: What is the overall length of the trail, broken down by town?

John Turner: The overall length is about 22 miles - about 8.5 miles in the Town of Brookhaven and about 13.5 in the Town of Riverhead. One of the issues we are going to have to deal with is the railroad – how will we get across the railroad. It is going to be critical if we are going to be successful in establishing this trail.

Dennis Cole: By the railroad trestle, where the culvert area is located, is in disrepair. The town might be able to negotiate with the railroad to do something with this.

John Turner: The purpose of us coming to you today was to help secure your permission, approval and support for the establishment of this trail as it certainly would require access through some county parks. As the information I handed out indicates to you, we have gotten these trail corridors incorporated within the New York State Open Space Plan so they are eligible for funding acquisition at the state level and we may be getting some state funds, more notably in the second trail I'm going to talk to you about.

Trustee Fritz: Are any parcels large enough to accommodate bow hunting and, if there is, would you address that?

John Turner: I don't think there are any, perhaps further north.

Trustee Cardillo: Does the trail go through federal, state, county and town lands?

John Turner: Yes.

John Turner: I'd also like to mention that the Brookhaven plan for the trail is a lot further ahead than the Riverhead plan.

Chairman Corwin: Are there any town parcels that you need to go through in Riverhead?

John Turner: Certainly the core portion of the Grumman property.

Lauretta Fischer: Did Brookhaven go through state and federal agencies to get their approval?

John Turner: For the Brookhaven portion of the trail we don't need permission from either state or federal agencies.

Chairman Corwin: It is a nice change to see trail design as high level on a government agenda. Every contribution to this system becomes a contribution to a larger network of systems.

John Turner: The next trail I'd like to discuss is the Glacial Ridge Trail which, as the name suggests, pretty much runs along the glacial moraine, east to west. This trail runs along the Ronkonkoma terminal moraine between Brookhaven Town Hall and public land on the Carman's River.

John Turner reviews trail path on the display map.

John Turner: We're hoping to secure your approval and support for this proposal.

Chairman Corwin: I'd like to ask the Commissioner for his thoughts on the proposal.

Commissioner Foley: The proposal is a perfectly appropriate use of county park land. It's what we should be fostering and promoting. We're lucky to have a town that has it high enough of a

priority to bring it to us and imaginative enough to use all this, this combination of public lands and some future private lands, to bring this about. There's no prohibition in the Nature Preserve Handbook against hiking trails. Bill Sickles and Nick Gibbons will have to work out the details with John and others as the trails are routed. I don't think there's an absolute requirement for approval of this, but I think it would be a nice thing to approve. I think there is nothing standing in the way of an outright approval, if that's what you believe is appropriate.

Chairman Corwin: Based on the Commissioner's remarks, I would suggest that a conceptual endorsement is appropriate. It's not, obviously, a parcel by parcel approval. That needs to be worked out with the Commissioner, Bill and Nick. I would ask that you provide smaller versions of the maps to Ann Rothenberg to be attached to the minutes so that in years to come we can know what we did or did not endorse.

A motion to approve a conceptual endorsement of the proposed hiking trails was made by Trustee Olsen and seconded by Trustee Colina. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

There are two pieces of legislation in your attachments that have an impact on fees and the Board of Trustees has the charter requirement to approve proposals on fees before they are finalized by the legislature.

I.R. 2021 – 2006: Waiving Beach Fees During Periods of Oppressive Weather Conditions

This legislation was prompted by the recent heat wave we went through. The state dropped the fees for its parks during that period of time. Most towns did not, as far as I'm aware of. I think we should not do this because we maintain a level of fees for county parks that is very reasonable. I don't think it precludes people from using their parks. The other part of this is that at 5:00 PM, 4:30 PM in some places, the fees are dropped - there are no fees. Without any budget adjustment, we extended the hours of our lifeguards to protect the people. I don't think we should nip away at the fee structure.

A motion to not approve waiving fees was made by Trustee Colina and seconded by Trustee Fritz. Unanimously approved to not approve waiving fees by a vote of 11-0-0.

I.R. 1953 – 2006: Linking County Park Fees for Veterans to Park Fees for Senior Citizens

It's difficult to do a precise fiscal impact on this because we don't know how many people using the parks today are veterans. We allow free access to disabled veterans now based on prior legislation. This needs clarification on the form of I.D. before approval.

A motion to table linking county park fees for veterans to park fees for senior citizens until issues can be resolved was made by Trustee Fritz and seconded by Trustee Colina. Unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

Lake Ronkonkoma

One of the largest all access playgrounds will soon be opening. We will notify the Trustees of this when we get the date. It is one of the largest handicapped accessible playgrounds on Long Island. It should be opening in the next three weeks. The County Executive will be there to cut the ribbon.

Adaptive Reuse Project for the Timber Point Clubhouse

This project will be kicked off tomorrow. It is the beginning of a historic restoration project of the entire clubhouse building. This project will probably take place in three phases over three years and will get it up to code. In the second phase we will be moving the public restrooms and locker

rooms down to the first floor, close to the pro shop, so that it makes more sense as a golf facility.

Re-siding of the Elwood Schoolhouse

The re-siding of the Elwood Schoolhouse in Huntington should be completed next week.

Bradstock Event

The Bradstock event came off O.K. They complied with most of the requirements that we put upon them. A couple of adjustments still have to be made, but overall it was a success.

Scully Estate

Work is continuing in a small way, but will ramp up fairly quickly, to restore the mansion on the Scully property in East Islip. We're continuing to negotiate with the Seatuck organization to be the tenant there and operate it as an environmental interpretive center.

Dog Runs

We're progressing work on two dog runs. The fence is up for the one at West Hills. We are talking with Legislator Kennedy's staff and dog owners about the one in Blydenburgh, which is going to require some adjustment to the Master Plan, but we have a conceptual layout set up.

Trap and Skeet

The legislation to close Trap and Skeet, which you voted to oppose at the last meeting, was defeated. The Trustees recommendation was taken by the Legislature.

Change in Organization

Will Maxwell, who has been the Superintendent of Golf Courses, is retiring at the end of this month. He has been a great asset to the organization. Will Maxwell will be returning in a part-time position to train his replacement, Tom D'Angelo, who was the Assistant Superintendent at Southward Ho for many years. He is on the job now and will step into Will's title at some point in the future.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Corwin: The first meeting of the Suffolk County Parks Foundation was two days ago. Tom Hroncich has undertaken the job of organizing the small herd of cast. At the moment they are Jay Miller, our former Trustee from Islip, John Fritz and me. My understanding is that this number will expand to a maximum of thirteen members. There are some members that will be appointed by the County Executive, one by the Legislature and general members that will be nominated and voted on by the existing Board. It's a very exciting project and very exciting to have staff at the beginning of an organization. With Tom's presence as the Executive Director, the future is looking very promising. We will soon have a bank account and the first contribution has come, and we appreciate that. We will keep you posted. John and I may ask some Board members to contribute some time and energy for the Foundation.

Our next meeting for the Foundation is scheduled for November 16th, 2006.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Borden received an unsolicited compliment about a camping experience at Cathedral Pines.

Trustee Pearsall mentions the Presiding Officer has introduced two local laws. One is a ban prohibiting skateboarding in county parks in areas other than designated areas. A police officer will be able to seize a skateboard on a first offense.

The other local law that will be introduced shortly will allow the police department to seize ATV's on the first offense. The current law is on the third offense.

Trustee Fritz comments on his difficulty gaining access to Smith Point campground as a Parks Trustee.

Commissioner Foley indicates we will educate Parks staff on the significance of Trustees.

Trustee Fritz: At the Sportsmen's Advisory Board meeting last week Bill informed me about the permit status of the fishing pier at Smith's Point. There was a public comment period on the permit application and the National Marine Fisheries indicated to the Army Corps of Engineers that they are worried about the eel grass beds and about a six foot roof at the base of the fishing pier. I went there after that meeting and there are no eel grass beds there to begin with.

Commissioner Foley: That's because when we first gave the drawing to DEC they instructed us to reorient the pier to stay out of eel grass beds, which we did. So no, there aren't any eel grass beds. The consultant, Bob Grover at GPI, is preparing a response for this and I don't think that's going to hold us up. We just need to get our response on the record. Part of the purpose of the roof is solar power for some low level lighting along the walkway so that people don't trip and fall.

Trustee Colina comments on the new, private golf course, Sebonack, which can be seen from Meschutt County Park. It is a prestigious, pristine golf course.

Chairman Corwin: In closing I'd like to thank everyone for traveling to Meschutt County Park. The view that you get gives everyone an idea of what the county parks system is all about and why we all do what we do. Every piece of parkland is a jewel, and this is certainly one example.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, October 19th, 2006 at Meadowedge in West Sayville at 1:00 PM. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon.

The motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee Fritz. Motion approved unanimously by a vote 11-0-0.

Minutes submitted by Ann Rothenberg.